
MEMORANDUM

TO: SHA SENIOR LEADERSHIP
FROM: OHD DIRECTOR ERIC MARABELLO, P.E. *Eric Marabello*
SUBJECT: 2026 SHA BICYCLE POLICY AND DESIGN GUIDELINES
DATE: MAY 21, 2026
**RESPONSE
REQUESTED** N/A
BY:

PURPOSE OF MEMORANDUM

To release the 2026 update to the State Highway Administration (SHA) Bicycle Policy and Design Guidelines and establish a timeline for implementation on applicable projects.

SUMMARY

The State Highway Administration has published the 2026 SHA Bicycle Policy and Design Guidelines for use on projects along state highways and other projects subject to the requirements of these guidelines. The SHA Bicycle Policy and Design Guidelines were last published in 2015 and have been updated to comply with the Maryland Department of Transportation Complete Streets Policy; to align SHA guidance with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, Fifth Edition (AASHTO Bicycle Guide); and to provide updated SHA-specific bicycle design guidance.

The 2026 SHA Bicycle Policy and Design Guidelines represent a shift from the guidance in the 2015 SHA Bicycle Policy and Design Guidelines with a greater focus on providing bicycle facilities that are appropriate to the roadway and land-use context and accommodating people biking at all levels of experience and comfort. These guidelines are intended to create a framework for the selection and design of bicycle facilities on SHA roadways that are appropriate to their design use and context.

The 2026 SHA Bicycle Policy and Design Guidelines incorporate the AASHTO Bicycle Guide, Fifth Edition as SHA's primary source for bicycle design guidance and minimum requirements rather than providing extensive, state-specific design guidance. The AASHTO Bicycle Guide, Fifth Edition, published in December 2024, provides comprehensive best practice guidance for the planning, design, and operation of bikeways along roadways in various contexts. The content in the guide was developed based on the latest research in the field of bicycle design and provides industry best practice guidance in bikeway planning and design.

IMPLEMENTATION

The following implementation guidance shall be used to determine which projects are required to meet the requirements of the 2015 SHA Bicycle Policy and Design Guidelines and which are required to meet the requirements of the updated 2026 SHA Bicycle Policy and Design Guidelines. Use of some or all of the updated design practices in the 2026 SHA Bicycle Policy and Design Guidelines is encouraged, where possible, to improve bicycle accommodations on all current design projects even if not required per the implementation guidance below.

Design Projects

- Any SHA project that Advertises after June 30, 2027, must meet the 2026 SHA Bicycle Policy and Design Guidelines.
- Any Local Public Agency (LPA) project that is subject to the requirements of the SHA Bicycle Policy and Design Guidelines that Advertises after June 30, 2027, must meet the 2026 SHA Bicycle Policy and Design Guidelines.
- Any Access Permit project with an SHA permit issuance date after June 30, 2027, must meet the 2026 SHA Bicycle Policy and Design Guidelines.
- Design projects initiated after the release of the 2026 SHA Bicycle Policy and Design Guidelines should meet the 2026 SHA Bicycle Policy and Design Guidelines.

Construction Projects

- Projects in construction will continue to be based on the guidelines that the advertised construction plans were based on. Therefore, all projects currently under construction will be based on the 2015 SHA Bicycle Policy and Design Guidelines.

Training

- The Office of Highway Development will provide a presentation to SHA on the changes resulting from the updated guidance in Spring 2026. This presentation will be made available for entities outside of SHA.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Conan Andrzejewski, State Highway Administration (SHA) Office of Highway Development Team Leader, at 410-545-2803 or by email at candrzejewski@mdot.maryland.gov or Jared Paper-Evers, P.E., SHA Office of Highway Development Assistant Division Chief, at 410-545-8400 or via email at jpaperevers@mdot.maryland.gov.

cc: Mr. Conan Andrzejewski, Team Leader, OHD, SHA
Jeff Davis, P.E., Deputy Director, OHD, SHA
Luis Gonzalez, P.E., Division Chief, OHD, SHA
Jared Paper-Evers, P.E., Assistant Division Chief, OHD, SHA